

Remarks:

This amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance this case to issue without delay.

Enclosed herewith is a PTO-1449 citing the US equivalent of a foreign reference cited as prior art in the introduction of the application.

The specification has been amended to eliminate some minor obvious errors and to add the requested US-style headings. The Abstract has been replaced with one more compliant with US practice. No new matter whatsoever has been added.

The claims have been wholly rewritten to overcome the formal and art rejections and objections. Once again, no new matter whatsoever has been added.

The new claims clearly define over the cited art. More particularly:

US 4,926,925 of Takahashi, which is the equivalent of EP 0,346,076 cited in the EP file, shows a system that is basically horizontal. Thus the tube is not an immersion tube inclined to the horizontal. Thus there is no actual pool inside the mold.

US 6,153,082 of DeBord is even further afield. Here the nozzle/tube ends well short of the mold, so that the strand is exposed and there could be no actual pool as described. At least the outer surface of the strand would have to be solid to bridge the gap between the nozzle and the mold.

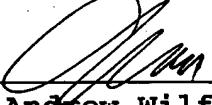
Finally JP 60-49,836 also of Takahashi shows a molding nozzle that extends between a pair of traveling mold sides. The liquid level 10 of the vessel does in fact lie above the mold, but there is no actual liquid pool formed in the mold and into which an immersion tube extends. According to this reference there is a wide nozzle fitted with 2 mm play between the rollers 2 and 2'. The nozzle shown in FIG. 4 can lie below the liquid level 10 in the vessel. This reference does not seem to give any further details to imply that the nozzle is an actual immersion tube.

Thus the amended claims clearly define over the cited art. Allowance of all claims and passage to issue are in order.

If only minor problems that could be corrected by means of a telephone conference stand in the way of allowance of this

case, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned to make the necessary corrections.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Enclosure: PTO-1449  
Corrected version of translation  
Substitute Specification  
Substitute Abstract